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 INFO RUOMBI/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 8556
 RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 5066
 RUEHAD/USINT BAGHDAD 3644
 RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 4184
 RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 2992
 RUEHJI/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 639
 RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 1199
 RUEHMA/AMEMBASSY MANAMA 8572
 RUQMMT/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT 5357
 RUEHRH/USELO RIYADH 3126
 RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 2087
 RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 5912
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 S E C R E T KUWAIT 4641

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PREL KU US XF ZP
 SUBJECT: CODEL SOLARZ MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: KUWAIT 4626

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT

2. SUMMARY: CODEL MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SHAIKH SABAH
 LASTED WELL BEYOND SCHEDULED TIME AND FONMIN WAS RELAXED
 AND RESPONSIVE THROUGHOUT. ON IRAN-IRAQ WAR, U.S. WAS
 URGED TO CONVINCE UN SEC GEN PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO GO TO
 TEHRAN; IRAN WOULD TRY TO SEIZE ALL GULF STATES IF IT
 SUCCEEDED AGAINST IRAQ; KUWAIT WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT
 TO DEFEND ITSELF. ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, U.S.
 SHOULD TALK DIRECTLY TO THE PLO WHICH ARAFAT CONTINUES
 TO LEAD; THE FEZ RESOLUTIONS ARE A VALID BASIS TO BEGIN
 NEGOTIATIONS WHICH SHOULD TAKE PLACE UNDER AN INTERNATIONAL
 UMBRELLA; KUWAIT WILL ACCEPT ANY SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE
 TO ALL PARTIES INVOLVED AS LONG AS IT IS NOT IMPOSED BY
 FORCE; SYRIA MUST ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT OR WILL SCUTTLE
 AGREEMENTS FROM WHICH IT IS EXCLUDED. ARABS WILL PUT ENOUGH
 PRESSURE ON SYRIA FOR IT TO WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON BUT ONLY
 AFTER ISRAEL WITHDRAWS. NEXT ARAB SUMMIT MAY DISCUSS
 EGYPT'S READMISSION TO THE ARAB LEAGUE. ARABS WOULD LOSE ALL
 TRUST IN U.S. SHOULD EMBASSY BE MOVED FROM TEL AVIV TO
 JERUSALEM, BUT KUWAIT-- WHICH ALSO HAS TO CONTENT WITH A
 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY-- COULD LIVE WITH CONGRESSIONAL ACTION
 THAT DID NOT COMPEL OR LEAD TO SUCH A MOVE. BRANDON GROVE
 NOMINATION WAS UNACCEPTABLE BECAUSE OF REACTION THAT WOULD
 HAVE FOLLOWED IN KUWAITI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND PRESS.

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FONMIN URGES MORE SUCH CODEL VISITS. END SUMMARY.

3. AUGUST 13 MEETING BETWEEN CODEL SOLARZ AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN AND INFORMATION MINISTER SHAIKH SABAH EXTENDED WELL BEYOND ITS SCHEDULED FORTY-FIVE MINUTES WITH SHAIKH SABAH RESPONDING EASILY AND FRANKLY TO THE CONGRESSMAN'S QUESTIONS. CONGRESSMAN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CHARGE, HFAC STAFFER ROTH, SOLARZ ADVISER KROLL AND POLOFF. PRESENT ON KUWAITI SIDE WERE MFA ACTING UNDERSECRETARY KHALED AL-JA'AFAR AND SEVERAL OTHER ADVISORS TO THE FONMIN.

4. IRAN-IRAQ WAR: SHAIKH SABAH TOLD CODEL THAT IRAN CONTINUES TO DEMAND THE REMOVAL OF SADDAM HUSSAYN AND WOULD, IF SUCCESSFUL, DESTROY THE BA'ATH REGIME AND SET UP A SHIA GOVERNMENT IN BAGHDAD. THE BEST HOPE FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION RESTS WITH THE UN AND THE U.S. SHOULD URGE UN SECGEN PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO PERSONALLY GO TO TEHRAN "EVEN IF HE DOESN'T HAVE AN INVITATION." ACKNOWLEDGING THAT IRAN HAS REFUSED PAST OFFERS BY PEREZ DE CUELLAR, THE FONMIN SAID HE THOUGHT SUCH AN INITIATIVE MIGHT NOW BE ACCEPTABLE BECAUSE KUWAIT HAD RECENTLY DETECTED SOME "INTERNAL DISPUTES" AMONG THE IRANIAN LEADERSHIP. HE ALSO ALLUDED TO EROSION OF POPULAR SUPPORT BY ASSERTING THAT SOME IRANIAN MOTHERS ARE GOING SO FAR AS TO BREAK THEIR SONS' ARMS TO AVOID MILITARY SERVICE.

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5. IN RESPONSE TO CODEL QUESTION, SABAH SAID THAT KUWAIT WOULD DEFEND ITSELF SHOULD IRAN DEFEAT IRAQ. THE IRANIS, HE SAID, WOULD TRY TO SEIZE ALL THE STATES OF THE GULF SHOULD THEY SUCCEED AGAINST IRAQ. KUWAIT'S SHIA MINORITY IS LOYAL TO THE GOK, ALTHOUGH "A FEW" MAY HAVE PRO-KHOMEINI SYMPATHIES. "WE DO NOT THINK ABOUT RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES AMONG KUWAITIS: OUR UN AMBASSADOR IS A SHIA AND WE HAVE SEVERAL OTHER SHIA KUWAITIS IN AMBASSADORIAL POSITIONS," SABAH COMMENTED.

6. ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT: SHAIKH SABAH SAID THAT THE FEZ SUMMIT RESOLUTION ON THE ARAB -ISRAELI CONFLICT WAS A VALID BASIS FOR NEGOTIATING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. NONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE FEZ SUMMIT OBJECTED TO POINT SEVEN WHICH SAID "ALL COUNTRIES" IN THE REGION SHOULD LIVE IN PEACE WITH EACH OTHER. AFTER FIRST TELLING CODEL THAT SPECIFIC MENTION OF ISRAEL IN POINT SEVEN HAD BEEN "UNNECESSARY," THE FONMIN LATER SAID THAT THE U.S. WOULD HAVE TO "GIVE SOMETHING" TO THE PLO BEFORE ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST WOULD BE EXPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

7. THE FONMAIN SAID HE SUPPORTED THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROPOSED BY THE SOVIETS AS THE BEST WAY TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE "AFTER THIRTY ODD YEARS" IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF "AN INTERNATIONAL UMBRELLA." IN THIS CONTEXT, SABAH SAID THAT KUWAIT AND THE OTHR ARAB COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO THE USSR RE-ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO CODEL PROBING, SABAH SAID, UNEQUIVOCALLY, THAT ANY SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT HAD TO BE COMPREHENSIVE INCLUDING THE GOLAN HEIGHTS: SYRIA, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD SCUTTLE ANY AGREEMENT FROM WHICH IT WAS EXCLUDED. "WE WOULD OPPOSE ANY SETTLEMENT THAT DID NOT INCLUDE THE SYRIANS. BESIDES, JORDAN CANNOT IGNORE SYRIA, AND VICE VERSA."

8. ON THE FORM A SETTLEMENT MIGHT TAKE, SHAIKH SABAH SAID THAT WHATEVER WAS ACCEPTABLE TO THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED--THE PLO, JORDAN, AND SYRIA--WOULD BE SUPPORTED BY THE GOK, "AS LONG AS THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT IMPOSED BY FORCE." IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC DETAILS, SHAIKH SABAH OPINED THAT ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO PRE-1967 BORDERS AND

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REVERSION TO A DIVIDED JERUSALEM ("BUT OPEN TO ALL") WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE ARABS AND THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE WITH THE IDEA OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL IN SUCH AN EVENTUALLY. SABAH THEN INTERJECTED THAT THE U.S. MUST TALK TO THE PLO DIRECTLY. AFTER CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ STATED THE U.S. POSITION ON SUCH TALKS, SABAH AGAIN SAID THAT THE U.S. SHOULD OFFER SOMETHING FIRST AND THEN THE PLO COULD RECOGNIZE ISRAEL.

9. PLO LEADERSHIP: SHAIKH SABAH, IN RESPONSE TO CODEL QUESTION, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PLO HAD SUFFERED FROM EVENTS IN LEBANON SINCE 1982: "EVERY PALESTINIAN AND EVERY ARAB" HAD BEEN HURT BY EVENTS IN LEBANON OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, HE ADDED. NEVERTHELESS, YASIR ARAFAT REMAINED THE LEADER OF THE PLO AND, IN THE FONMIN'S OPINION, ARAFAT WAS A GOOD LEADER. SABAH WARNED THAT BY REFUSING TO DEAL WITH ARAFAT THE U.S. WAS RISKING RADICALIZATION OF THE PALESTINIANS.

10. ISRAEL, SYRIA, LEBANON, EGYPT: THE FONMIN SAID HE SAW NO BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ISRAEL'S LABOR AND LIKUD PARTIES' ATTITUDES TOWARD RESOLVING THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. ON SYRIA, SABAH ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME OF THE AL-ASSAD REGIME'S ACTIONS--IN HAMA, AS WELL AS IN LEBANON--HAD CAUSED STRAIN BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. KUWAIT'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HE NOTED, HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF DAMASCUS. (WHEN CODEL DREW A PARALLEL BETWEEN EVENTS IN HAMA AND IN SABRA/SHATILLA, SABAH DISAGREED, IMPLYING THAT THE FORMER HAD BEEN AN INTERNAL MATTER, WHEREAS THE LATTER WAS NOT.) AL-ASSAD WAS IN GOOD HEALTH, THE FONMIN ASSERTED, AND EVEN IF HE LEFT THE SCENE THE SYRIAN B'ARTH PARTY WOULD REMAIN IN POWER. THE FONMIN TOLD CODEL "NOT TO WORRY" ABOUT

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SYRIA WITHDRAWING FROM LEBANON: IF ISRAEL PULLS OUT "WE (THE ARABS) WILL PUT ENOUGH PRESSURE ON AL-ASSAD TO GET HIM TO WITHDRAW HIS TROOPS." SABAH VOLUNTEERED THAT HE THOUGHT SYRIA WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE ISRAEL NECESSARY GUARANTEES REGARDING ITS SECURITY FROM BORDER ATTACKS TO PERMIT THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON. IN RESPONSE TO CODEL'S QUESTION, FONMIN SAID THAT THE GOK WOULD LIKE TO SEE EGYPT RETURN TO THE ARAB LEAGUE. SABAH MAINTAINED THAT HE HAD OPPOSED THE ARAB BREAK IN RELATIONS WITH CAIRO. HE COMMENTED THAT EGYPT'S READMISSION MIGHT BE ON THE AGENDA OF THE NEXT ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT "LATER THIS YEAR."

11. JERUSALEM INITIATIVE: ON THE 75. CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVE TO RELOCATE THE EMBASSY FROM TEL AVIV TO JERUSALEM, SHAIKH SABAH SAID THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD CAUSE THE ARABS TO LOSE "ALL TRUST" IN THE U.S. CHARGE NOTED THE ADMINISTRATION'S OPPOSITION TO SUCH A MOVE. THE FONMIN RESPONDED BY OBSERVING THAT THE GOK HAD SIMILAR PROBLEMS WITH ITS OWN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES AND THAT, AS LONG AS THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION SUCCESSFULLY BLOCKED THE EMBASSY MOVE, KUWAIT COULD LIVE WITH NON-BINDING CALLS FOR SUCH ACTION. SABAH COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT "OF COURSE, WE WOULD NOT BE HAPPY WITH SUCH CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTIONS," WHETHER OR NOT THEY WERE BINDING. (AT A LUNCH FOR CODEL THE NEXT DAY, ACTING UNDERSECRETARY AL-JA-AFAR VOLUNTEERED TO CHARGE THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO "POLITE" ON THE JERUSALEM QUESTION.)

12. CONCLUSION: AS THE SESSION DREW TO A CLOSE, SHAIKH SABAH SAID HE APPRECIATED CODEL'S VISIT AND THAT CODEL SHOULD "TELL OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO COME TO KUWAIT." CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ RESPONDED BY OBSERVING THAT OUR FREINDLY RELATIONS WERE SOMETIMES COMPLICATED BY SPECIFIC ACTIONS. JUST AS THE U.S. REFUSAL TO SELL STINGER MISSILES HAD COMPLICATED THINGS FOR THE GOK, THE GOK'S REFUSAL TO

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ACCEPT BRANDON GROVE AS AMBASSADOR HAD COMPLICATED THINGS FOR THE U.S. THE FONMIN RESPONDED THAT HE HAD DONE ALL HE COULD TO KEEP THE GROVE REFUSAL "INFORMAL AND NOT ON PAPER," BUT HAD THEN READ ABOUT KUWAIT'S ACTION IN "THE WASHINGTON POST" THE NEXT DAY. IN REPLY TO DO CODEL'S OBSERVATION THAT GROVE HAD NOT BEEN SEEN AS A FRIEND BY THE ISRAELIS, SABAH SAID THAT THE PROBLEM FOR THE GOK HAD BEEN THE VITRIOLIC REACTION GROVE'S ACCEPTANCE WOULD HAVE PRODUCED IN THE KUWAIT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND PRESS, NOT BECAUSE OF GROVE, THE INDIVIDUAL, BUT BECAUSE HE WAS COMING DIRECTLY FROM JERUSALEM. THE DIALOGUE ENDED ON A FRIENDLY NOTE WHEN CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ OBSERVED THAT HE KNEW AMBASSADOR QUINTON PERSONALLY AND HELD HIM IN HIGH REGARD.

13. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH CODEL TOUCHED ON SEVERAL PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE SUBJECTS THAT HAVE IN PAST MEETINGS PRODUCED STRONG REACTIONS FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER, SHAIKH SABAH REMAINED CORDIAL AND RESPONSIVE THROUGHOUT THE ENCOUNTER. HE MAY TRY TO CONTACT CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ IN NEW YORK NEXT MONTH DURING THE UNGA. FONMIN PLACES AN EXTRAORDINARY PREMIUM ON PERSONAL DIPLOMACY AND LIKES TO KNOW THE PLAYERS ON THE VARIOUS SIDES OF ISSUES OF CONCERN TO KUWAIT. HIS REQUEST FOR MORE VISITORS SHOULD BE MET WHENEVER WE CAN.

14. THIS MESSAGE WAS NOT SEEN BY CODEL.
SHAFT

END OF MESSAGE

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